



**Region 4 Strategic Agricultural
Initiative Food Quality Protection
Act Grant Program: FY 2006
Request for Proposals (RFP)**

September 6, 2006

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Region 4
Strategic Agricultural Initiative Food Quality Protection Act
Grant Program: FY2006 Request for Proposals (RFP)**

AGENCY NAME: U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 4, Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management
Division

FUNDING NAME: Strategic Agriculture Initiative Food Quality
Protection Act (FQPA) Grant Program

ANNOUNCEMENT TYPE: Request for Proposals-Initial Announcement for Fiscal Year
2006.

RFP NO: EPA-R4-SAI-06-001

CATALOG OF FEDERAL DOMESTIC ASSISTANCE (CFDA) Number: 66.716 -
Surveys, Studies, Demonstrations, Educational Outreach, and Special Projects within the
Office of Prevention, Pesticides, and Toxic Substances.

IMPORTANT DATES:

- **October 30, 2006** Closing date and time for receipt of the proposals is
October 30, 2006, at 5:00 p.m., Eastern Time (EST).
Applications submitted via U.S. mail must be
received in the Program Office by the closing date and time.
NO LATE PROPOSALS WILL BE CONSIDERED.
(See Section IV for further information)
- **November 30, 2006** Funding decisions are announced
- **December 31, 2006** Full application/workplan due to EPA, Region 4
- **March 30, 2007** Awards made

OVERVIEW: This notice announces the availability of funds and solicits application packages to help support efforts by the agricultural community to transition to lower risk pesticides and pest management practices in agricultural production, resulting in a sustainable food system. The emphasis is on food crops, however other agricultural commodities (including ornamentals) will be considered, especially where there are significant demonstrable environmental concerns. The program supports grants for education, extension, demonstration, and implementation projects.

Assistance under this program is generally available to States, local governments, territories, Indian Tribes, and possessions of the U.S., including the District of Columbia, international organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public or private non-profit institution, which submit applications proposing projects with significant technical merit and relevance. All projects must occur in one or more of the Region 4 states:

Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and/or Tennessee.

If you have previously received funding for any EPA Strategic Agriculture Initiative project, it is essential that you demonstrate how the proposed project is different. Please keep in mind that past performance will be taken into account during the review process, including successful implementation of similar projects and timely and adequate reporting.

FUNDING/AWARDS: The total estimated funding available under this competitive opportunity is approximately \$400,000. Under this announcement, EPA Region 4 anticipates awarding up to 2-4 two year grants, each ranging up to \$100,000. The actual number of awards and award amounts will depend upon the quality of project application packages received and the availability of funds. All projects must be completed within the project performance period of 24 months.

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Section I. Funding Opportunity Description

A. Program Description

1. *Purpose and Scope* - The purpose of the Strategic Agricultural Initiative (SAI) Food Quality Protection Act (FQPA) Grant Program is to help implement FQPA and support transition efforts by growers to more environmentally-sound pest management practices. The program supports grants for education, extension, demonstration and implementation projects. A priority for FY2006 in Region 4 is the development of an environmental certification program (example: "Protected Harvest") for a particular commodity. The focus should be on specific reduced risk pest management practices but can incorporate other sustainable practices as well. This may be part of an eco-labeling marketing initiative. While fruit and vegetable crops remain a priority, other agricultural commodities (including ornamentals) will be considered. Applicants should have a proven track record of grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices. Successful applicants will also have a strong outreach and extension component to their program. "Sustainable" agriculture refers to farming practices that are environmentally sound, economically viable, and socially responsible.

2. *Goals and Objectives* - The goals of the SAI FQPA Grant Program are:

- Utilize demonstration projects, outreach, and/or education to increase the adoption of reduced-risk pest management practices that provide alternatives to a heavy dependency on the use of highly toxic pesticides and/or pesticides impacted negatively by FQPA decisions.
- Encourage partnerships between producers, commodity groups, scientists, extension, local, state or federal government agencies, and other stakeholders to demonstrate, promote, and utilize reduced-risk pest management practices in the field.
- Actively engage scientists, producers, industry, and local, state or federal partners in the specifics of implementing FQPA.
- Measure and document the effects of using the reduced-risk pest management practices on the environment, human health and community.
- Facilitate a sustainable whole farm systems approach that utilizes conservation programs to provide incentives for adoption of reduced-risk pest management practices and tools.
- Demonstrate region-specific pest management practices and integrated crop management systems to replace pesticide uses which may be cancelled or restricted under FQPA.

B. Background

Statutory Authority

The statutory authority for this grant program is the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), Section 20, 7 U.S.C. § 136r.

The FQPA, passed by Congress in 1996, establishes health-based standards for pesticide residues in raw and processed food. It is intended to protect public health from exposure to pesticides and to create an environment favorable for the development and adoption of lower risk, effective crop protection tools for U.S. agriculture. The EPA, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), and numerous agricultural organizations are working on efforts to implement the FQPA. For this effort, EPA established regional programs for FQPA implementation and partnership activities to reduce risks and use of pesticides in agriculture. For more background information on FQPA, visit the EPA website at <http://www.epa.gov/oppfead1/fqpa/>.

C. EPA Strategic Plan Linkage to SAI FQPA

Linkage to EPA Strategic Plan/GPRA Architecture. These assistance agreements will support EPA Strategic Plan Goal 4 - Healthy Communities and Ecosystems; Objective 4.1 - Chemical,

Organism and Pesticide Risk; and Program/Project 92 - Field Programs. The SAI helps EPA respond directly to Sub-objective 4.1.1, Reducing Exposure to Toxic Pesticides “Through 2008, protect human health, communities and ecosystems from pesticide use by reducing exposure to pesticides posing the greatest risk. Selected national performance targets by 2008 include: 1) Decrease, by 30 percent, the occurrences of residues of carcinogens and cholinesterase inhibiting neurotoxic pesticides on food eaten by children, and/or 2) Reduce, by 30 percent, the mortality to non-targeted terrestrial and aquatic wildlife caused by pesticides. Applicants must identify project goals and objectives that are aligned with the SAI FQPA Grant Program. Applicants must also identify and quantify anticipated environmental outputs and achieve measurable environmental outcomes that directly relate to the project’s objectives and goals.

D. Measuring Environmental Results

Measuring Environmental Results: Outcomes and Outputs

Pursuant to EPA Order 5700.7, “Environmental Results under EPA Assistance Agreement,” EPA requires that all grant recipients adequately address environmental outputs and outcomes. Outputs and outcomes differ both in their nature and in how they are measured. Applicants must discuss anticipated environmental outputs and outcomes in their proposed workplan.

1. *Outcomes.* The term “outcome” means the result, effect of consequence that will occur from carrying out an environmental program or activity that is related to an environmental or programmatic goal or objective. Outcomes may be environmental, behavioral, health-related or programmatic in nature, but must be quantitative. They may not necessarily be achievable within an assistance agreement funding period.

Through this grant program, EPA expects to: (a) increase the number of growers using reduced-risk pest management practices; (b) measure quantitative and qualitative benefits to human health, the environment, and communities; and (c) support partnerships between crop producers, EPA, other federal, state, and local agencies, and other interested stakeholders to implement reduced-risk programs and to leverage funds from other sources to increase the scope of the SAI FQPA program.

2. *Outputs.* The term “output” means an environmental activity, effort, and/or associated work products related to an environmental goal and objective that will be produced or provided over a period of time or by a specified date. Outputs may be quantitative or qualitative but must be measurable during an assistance agreement funding period.

The anticipated outputs of these projects include: (a) educational and outreach materials for growers; (b) conservation plans and environmental management systems for growers that include reduced- risk pest management; (c) conferences, seminars, and on-site field training; and (d) partnerships established between federal and non-federal programs to provide reduced-risk pest management programs for crop producers.

Section II. Award Information

A. Amount of Funding Available

The EPA Region 4 SAI anticipates having approximately **\$400,000** in 2006 to award eligible applicants under this announcement. Projects requesting **\$50,000** to **\$100,000** will be considered for funding. Indirect cost rates will not increase the \$100,000 maximum funding amount. Costs incurred by the applicant prior to the receipt of a written offer of a grant award from EPA are incurred at the applicant's risk. If for any reason EPA does not fund your grant application or does not approve the pre-award costs, EPA is under no obligation to reimburse applicants for these costs.

B. Start Date/Project Duration

Award funds for the selected proposals will be available in November 2006; however, **grantees should not expect to receive funds or begin projects until spring of 2007**, to allow sufficient time for completion of required paperwork and the offer and acceptance of a grant award. Funding may be used for **up to two years** from the time grants are awarded.

C. Total Number of Awards

Under this announcement, EPA Region 4 anticipates awarding 2-4 two year grants, each ranging up to \$100,000. The number of awards will depend on individual proposal costs and the total final amount of Federal funding available. Current SAI grantees may submit proposals for a new grant but not for an increase in existing awards which would be outside the scope of this announcement.

D. Disclaimer

Funding for these projects is not guaranteed and is subject to the availability of funds and the evaluation of proposals based on the criteria in this announcement. EPA reserves the right to partially fund proposals/applications by funding discrete activities, portions, or phases of proposed projects. If EPA decides to partially fund a proposal/application, it will do so in a manner that does not prejudice any applicants or affect the basis upon which the proposal/application, or portion thereof, was evaluated and selected for awards, and that maintains the integrity of the competition and selection process. Award of funding through this year's competition is not a guarantee of future funding.

EPA reserves the right to make additional awards under this announcement (after the original award selections are made) if additional funding becomes available. Any additional selections for awards will be made no later than 4 months after the original selection decisions. The additional selections must be made in accordance with the terms of this announcement and EPA policy.

EPA reserves the right to reject all applications/proposals and make no awards under this announcement or make fewer awards than anticipated.

Section III. Eligibility Information

A. Who May Apply?

EPA is soliciting proposals from States, U.S. territories or possessions, federally recognized Indian Tribal governments, and Native American organizations, public and private universities and colleges, hospitals, laboratories, other public and private non-profit institutions and individuals are eligible to apply for funding. Non-profit organizations described in Section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code that engage in lobbying activities as defined in Section 3 of the Lobbying Disclosure Act of 1995 are not eligible to apply. Implementation of all projects must occur within one or more of the eight states of EPA Region 4: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.

B. Matching/Cost Share Requirements

Matching funds are not required; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to build partnerships and maximize the benefits of EPA funding. Applicants will be evaluated based on their ability to produce leveraging funds in Section V under selection criteria number 10.

C. Threshold Eligibility Issues

In order to be eligible for funding consideration under this announcement, proposals must meet all of the following conditions. Failure to meet any of the following criteria in the proposal will result in the automatic disqualification of the proposal for funding consideration. Applicants deemed ineligible as a result of the threshold eligibility review will be notified within 15 calendar days of the ineligibility determination.

1. Proposals must support Goal 4 of EPA's Strategic Plan (listed above in Section I.A.2) by reducing the exposure to pesticides posing the greatest risk.
2. Proposals must request between \$50,000 and \$100,000. Proposals that request more than \$100,000 or less than \$50,000 will not be considered for funding.
3. Proposals must substantially comply with all format and content requirements and directions for submittal contained Section IV of this announcement. Proposals which do not meet these criteria will be rejected. In addition, where a page limit is expressed in Section IV, with respect to the proposal or parts of the proposal, pages in excess of the page limitation will not be reviewed. Proposals must be received by the EPA through <http://www.grants.gov> on or before the solicitation closing date published in Section IV of this announcement. Proposals received after the published closing date will be returned to the sender without further consideration.

4. In addition, since the SAI FQPA grant program is intended to support implementation projects, proposals should not include activities that involve basic research. Proposals **may include** a component for applied on-farm research, as long as they also have demonstrations, education and/or outreach activities.
5. The EPA will consider only one proposal by each individual investigator. Proposals from different investigators within the same organization are acceptable.
6. Projects must be located in one or more of the following Region 4 states: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina and/or Tennessee. (Note: It is not required for the applicant to be located in Region 4.)

Section IV. Application and Submission Information

A. How to Obtain a Financial Application Package

The complete grants financial application package can be downloaded from EPA's website at: <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/index.htm> or <http://www.grants.gov/>. Potential applicants may request a paper copy of the financial application package by contacting the EPA contact listed in Section VII of this announcement. If you wish to submit your application electronically, you must use the electronic package available at the <http://www.grants.gov/>.

B. Content and Form of Applicant Submission

Proposal workplans, as described in Part B below, must be limited to 16 pages single spaced including the cover page. In addition, resumes and other supporting documentation such as letters of support can be submitted as attachments and will not count toward the 16 page limit. All proposals, complete with attachments, must be formatted for 8 1/2 x 11" paper using no smaller than 12 point Times New Roman font with 1" margins as one Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat (PDF) file. All application materials must be completed in English.

All application packages must contain a project workplan and a completed and signed federal grant application (SF 424 and 424A) which can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/ogd/AppKit/application.htm> (See Section IV D I-II for detail about completion of SF 424 and 424A). The project workplan must describe the proposed project and address all of the threshold eligibility factors in Section III and the evaluation criteria listed in Section V(A).

1. Cover Page: Include the following information: (Page 1)

The cover page should list the following information with your letterhead:

Project Title:
Project Coordinator:
Organization Name and Address:
Telephone No.: Fax No.: E-mail Address:
Project Duration (including Starting Date and Ending Date):
First Year Funding Request:

Second Year Funding Request, if applicable:
Total Funding Request (for the entire project):

2. Budget/Resources: (Page 2)

Please submit a detailed budget with your proposal, linking the cost of each objective with the budget. Include information on other funding sources (leverage funds), if any. Describe how leveraged resources will be obtained and what role EPA funding will play in the overall project.

3. Table of Contents: (Page 3)

4. Executive Summary: (Page 4)

The Executive Summary should be a stand alone document, **not to exceed one (1) page**, containing the specifics of what is proposed and what you expect to accomplish regarding measuring or movement toward achieving project goals. This summary should identify the **measurable environmental results** you expect including potential human health and ecological benefits. (See Section I. for more information about environmental results)

5. Proposal Narrative: (Includes Parts I-VIII-the proposal narrative should address each of the ranking criteria in Section V of the announcement): Parts I-VIII listed below **should not exceed twelve (12) pages**.

- a. **Part I: Project Title** - Self-explanatory.
- b. **Part II: Objectives** - A numbered list (1, 2, etc.) of concisely written project objectives. In most cases, each objective can be stated in a single sentence.
- c. **Part III: Justification** - For each objective listed in Part II above, discuss the potential outcome in terms of environmental, human health, pesticide risk and/or use reduction or pollution prevention. If appropriate, the target pest(s) and crop(s) should be explicitly stated. This section should be numbered with a justification corresponding to each objective and should explain the importance of the project and the target crops(s).
- d. **Part IV: Literature Review** - Briefly describe relevant information currently available. This should also include information on projects currently in progress that are relevant to or provide the basis for either the experimental design or the validation of a new approach to pest management.
- e. **Part V: Approach and Methods** - Describe in detail how the program will be carried out. Describe how the system or approach will support the program goals. Include a well-conceived workplan that is realistic and appropriate to achieving the identified objectives. This should include a brief background on the main issues or challenges, specific objectives, main activities and expected outcomes and deliverables. Include the project area.

- f. **Part VI: Performance Measures, Expected Outputs and Outcomes, Evaluation Plan** - Please describe in detail your plan for evaluating the success of the program in terms of **measurable environmental results** (See Section I.). How will you track the selected measures? The workplan should include **performance measures** that demonstrate the progress or environmental benefits of the project. Any project surveys are required to provide measurable outputs and outcomes. Include specific milestones and how you will measure improvements to human health, the ecosystem, or quality of life. Pick two or three measures from the SAI Toolbox which can be found at <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai> (SAI Grant Applicants, Performance Measures). In addition to the performance measures listed in Section V (Selection Criteria), all proposals and reports (progress and final) should also include the following elements for reporting of project measures:
- Number of acres likely to be impacted by the project.
 - Current level of pest management and the level that is expected to be achieved at the end of the project based on the SAI Transition Index. See <http://www.aftresearch.org/sai> (SAI Grant Applicants).
 - Percent reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients and/or pesticide products.
 - Evidence that the applicant expects to partner with others and/or encourage favorable attention to the project with media releases or other outreach activities.
- g. **Part VII: Environmental Results Past Performance** - Submit a list of all EPA and other Federal agency assistance agreements that your organization performed within the last three years, and describe how you documented and/or reported on whether you were making progress towards achieving the expected results (e.g., outputs and outcomes) under those agreements. If you were not making progress, please indicate whether, and how, you documented why not. In evaluating applicants under this factor in Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior federal agency grantors (e.g., to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant). If you have no relevant or available past performance reporting history, please indicate this in the proposal, and you will receive a neutral score for this factor under Section V.
- h. **Part VIII: Programmatic Capability** - Submit a list of all federally funded agreements similar in size, scope and relevance to the proposed project that your organization performed within the last three years and describe (i) whether and how you were able to successfully carry out and manage those agreements and (ii) your history of meeting the reporting requirements under those agreements including submitting acceptable final technical reports. In evaluating applicants under these factors Section V, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including information from EPA files and from current and prior Federal agency grantor (e.g. to verify and/or supplement the information provided by the applicant.) In addition, provide information on your organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the proposed

project, and your staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the proposed project. If you have no relevant or available past performance or past history, please indicate this in the proposal and you will receive a neutral score for the elements of this factor under Section V.

6. Proposal Appendices: These appendices must be included in the grant proposal. Continue page numbering as appropriate after Part VI.

- a. **Appendix A. Literature Cited.** List cited key literature references alphabetically by author.
- b. **Appendix B. Timetable.** A timetable that includes what will be accomplished under each of the objectives during the project and when completion of each objective is anticipated.
- c. **Appendix C. (Optional).** Signed letters of commitment or support.

C. Submission Method

Please note that you may choose to apply *one of two ways*. If you wish to apply with a hard copy submission, please follow the instructions under “Hard Copy Submission” below. If you wish to apply electronically via Grants.gov, please follow the appropriate instructions under “Electronic Submission” below. EPA encourages applicants to submit their application/proposal materials electronically through <http://www.grants.gov>. Please only use one form of submission. Proposals should be typewritten, in 12 point using an 8.5 x 11 inch paper with minimum 1-inch horizontal and vertical margins.

1. Hard Copy Submission – Two hard copies of the complete proposal package as described in Section IV B “Content and Form of Applicant Submission” and in Section IV D I-II. “Proposal Application Materials” **must be received** by October 30, 5 p.m. EST. Hard copy submissions may be made either by courier or express mail. Email submissions are no longer allowed. Please mark all submissions: **ATTN: SAI FQPA Grant Program** (See address below). The CD may be in Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) or Microsoft Word (.doc). Nomination letters(s), letters of support, and maps will need to be scanned so that they can be submitted as part of the CD. Pictures and/or computer generated maps may be included as separate files using .jpg or .tif format.

All hard copy proposals and CDs should be sent to:

Lora Lee Schroeder
Strategic Agricultural Initiative Coordinator
APTMD, Pesticides Section
U.S. EPA Region 4
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, GA 30303-8960

Ph: 404-562-9015

Fax: 404-562-8973

E-mail address: schroeder.lora@epa.gov

2. Electronic Submission – If you wish to apply electronically, the electronic submission of your proposal/application must be made by an official representative of your institution who is registered with Grants.gov and is authorized to sign applications for federal assistance. For more information, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on “Get Registered,” on the left side of the page. *Note that the registration process may take a week or longer to complete.* If your organization is not currently registered with Grants.gov, please encourage your office to designate an AOR and ask that individual to begin the registration process as soon as possible.

To begin the application process for this grant announcement, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Apply for Grants” tab on the left side of the page. Then click on “Apply Step 1: Download a Grant Application Package and Instructions” to download the PureEdge viewer and obtain the application package for this announcement. To download the PureEdge viewer click on the “PureEdge Viewer” link. Once you have downloaded the viewer, you may retrieve the application package and instructions by entering the Funding Opportunity Number, EPA, EPAR4-SAI-06-001, or the CFDA number 66.716 in the appropriate field. You may also be able to access the application package by clicking on the button “How To Apply” at the top right of the synopsis page for this announcement on <http://www.grants.gov> (to find the synopsis page, go to <http://www.grants.gov> and click on the “Find Grant Opportunities” button on the left side of the page and then go to Search Opportunities and use the Browse by Agency feature to go to EPA opportunities).

Application/proposal materials submitted through Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically.

Please be sure to view the additional instructions for applying electronically under this announcement through use of Grants.gov that are available for download on Grants.gov.

If you have any technical difficulties while applying electronically, please refer to <http://www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp>.

Application Submission Deadline: Your organization’s AOR must submit your complete application electronically to EPA through Grants.gov (<http://www.grants.gov>) no later than October 30, 2006, 5:00 p.m. EST.

D. Proposal/Application Materials

The following forms and documents are required to be submitted under this announcement:

- I. Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424)
- II. Budget Information for Non-Construction Programs (SF-424A)
- III. Narrative Proposal

Prepare the application, budget information and narrative proposal and appendices in accordance with the instructions described below:

I. Standard Form (SF) 424, Application for Federal Assistance

Complete the forms. There are no attachments. Please be sure to include an organization fax number and e-mail address in Block 5 of the Standard Form SF 424. Please note that the organizational Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number must be included on the SF-424. Applicants who do not already have a DUNS number may find instructions for obtaining one at the following website: [http://www.Grants.Gov/Get Started](http://www.Grants.Gov/GetStarted). A DUNS number may also be obtained at no cost by calling the toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711.

II. Standard Form SF 424A – Budget Information:

Complete the form. There are no attachments. The total amount of federal funding requested for the project period should be shown on line 5(e) and on line 6(k) of SF-424A. If indirect costs are included, the amount of indirect costs should be entered on line 6(j). The indirect cost rate (i.e., a percentage), the base (e.g., personnel costs and fringe benefits), and the amount should also be indicated on line 22. If indirect costs are requested, a copy of the Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement must be submitted as part of the application package.

III. Narrative Proposal and Appendices

Prepare as described in Section IV.B(1) of the announcement. The project's workplan including Appendices should be readable in Microsoft Word or Adobe Portable Document Format (.pdf) and consolidated into a single file.

Application Preparation and Submission Instructions:

Documents I through II listed under Application Materials above should appear in the "Mandatory Documents" box on the Grants.gov Grant Application Package page.

For document I, click on the appropriate form and then click "Open Form" below the box. The fields that must be completed will be highlighted in yellow. Optional fields and completed fields will be displayed in white. If you enter an invalid response or incomplete information in a field, you will receive an error message. When you have finished filling out the form, click "Save." When you return to the electronic Grant Application Package page, click on the form you just completed, and then click on the box that says, "Move Form to Submission List." This action will move the document over to the box that says, "Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission."

For document II, you will need to attach electronic files (including electronic files for the Proposal Appendices). Prepare your narrative proposal and appendices as described above and save the document to your computer as a Microsoft Word or Acrobat (PDF) file. When you are ready to attach it to the application package, click on "Project Narrative Attachment Form," and open the form. Click "Add Mandatory Project Narrative File," and then attach your proposal and appendices (previously saved to your computer) using the browse window that

appears. You may then click “View Mandatory Project Narrative File” to view it. Enter a brief descriptive title of your project in the space beside “Mandatory Project Narrative File Filename;” the filename should be no more than 40 characters long. If there are other attachments that you would like to submit to accompany your proposal, you may click “Add Optional Project Narrative File” and proceed as before. When you have finished attaching the necessary documents, click “Close Form.” When you return to the “Grant Application Package” page, select the “Project Narrative Attachment Form” and click “Move Form to Submission List.” The form should now appear in the box that says, “Mandatory Completed Documents for Submission.”

Once you have finished filling out all of the forms/attachments and they appear in one of the “Completed Documents for Submission” boxes, click the “Save” button that appears at the top of the Web page. It is suggested that you save the document a second time, using a different name, since this will make it easier to submit an amended package later if necessary. Please use the following format when saving your file: “Applicant Name – FY06 – SAI Proposal – 1st Submission” or “Applicant Name – FY 06 SAI Proposal – Back-up Submission.” If it becomes necessary to submit an amended package at a later date, then the name of the 2nd submission should be changed to “Applicant Name – FY06 SAI Proposal – 2nd Submission.”

Once your application package has been completed and saved, send it to your AOR for submission to U.S. EPA through Grants.gov. Please advise your AOR to close all other software programs before attempting to submit the application package through Grants.gov.

In the “Application Filing Name” box, your AOR should enter your organization’s name (abbreviate where possible), the fiscal year (e.g., FY06), and the grant category (e.g., SAI FQPA Grant Program). The filing name should not exceed 40 characters. From the “Grant Application Package” page, your AOR may submit the application package by clicking the “Submit” button that appears at the top of the page. The AOR will then be asked to verify the agency and funding opportunity number for which the application package is being submitted. If problems are encountered during the submission process, the AOR should reboot his/her computer before trying to submit the application package again. [It may be necessary to turn off the computer (not just restart it) before attempting to submit the package again.] If the AOR continues to experience submission problems, he/she may contact Grants.gov for assistance by phone at 1-800-518-4726 or e-mail at support@grants.gov, or contact Lora Lee Schroeder at (404) 562-9015, or by e-mail at Schroeder.lora@epa.gov.

Application packages submitted thru Grants.gov will be time/date stamped electronically. If you have not received a confirmation of receipt from EPA (*not from* support@grants.gov) within 30 days of the application deadline, please contact Lora Lee Schroeder at (404) 562-9015. Failure to do so may result in your application not being reviewed.

If you have never used Grants.Gov before, here are some tips:

Most organizations have found Grants.Gov to be a user friendly system. The most frequent concern has occurred when an organization has delayed obtaining the unique electronic signature to the last minute.

Register for your electronic signature early! An electronic signature requires three levels of authorization before you can submit on line. You need to decide who will be the AOR, the caretaker of the electronic signature for

your organization. At a university the Chief Grant Official generally signs all of the electronic grants for the entire institution. If all goes well, this process takes about a week, but some organizations have encountered internal and external delays; therefore the registration process can take longer.

Remember, you cannot submit your application online until your organization has e-authorization credentials. Here are the basis steps:

1. Obtain a Certified DUNS Number. You must first have a certified, unique Dun and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. Some organizations may have more than one DUNS number registered. Only one can be certified. This can lead to unexpected delays.
2. Central Contractor Registry and Credential Provider Registration. Once you have your unique, approved DUNS number, you need to register with the Central Contractor Registry.
3. Grants.Gov Electronic Signature Authorization. Once steps A and B are complete, you will then need to contact Grants. Gov. The Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) will be assigned a password that will enable him or her to sign the Grants.Gov applications electronically. The AOR must be an individual who is able to make legally binding commitments for the applicant organization. Organizations may designate more than one AOR.

Be sure to download and read the instructions and the application at the Grants.Gov website

C. Submission Dates

All proposals must be **received** in the Program Office by October 30, 2006, 5 p.m. EST. Applications will be considered late and ineligible to receive funding if not received on or before the application submission date and time, regardless of the postmark date.

D. Confidential Business Information

In accordance with 40 CFR 2.203, applicants may claim all or a portion of their application/proposal as confidential business information. EPA will evaluate confidentiality claims in accordance with 40 CFR Part 2. Applicants must clearly mark applications/proposals or portions of applications/proposals they claim as confidential. If no claim of confidentiality is made, EPA is not required to make the inquiry to the applicant otherwise required by 40 CFR 2.204(c)(2) prior to disclosure.

E. Intergovernmental Review

Applicants (except for Indian Tribes and Tribal Consortia) must comply with the Intergovernmental Review Process and/or consultation provisions of Executive Order 12372 or Section 204 of the Demonstration Cities and Metropolitan Development Act, if applicable, which are contained in 40 CFR Part 29. Further information regarding this requirement will be provided if your proposal is selected for funding.

F. Other Information

EPA Region 4 will respond to questions from individual applicants regarding threshold eligibility criteria, administrative issues related to the submission of the proposal, and requests for clarification about the announcement. However, in accordance with EPA's Competition

Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1), EPA staff will not meet with individual applicants to discuss draft proposals, provide informal comments on draft proposals, or provide advice to applicants on how to respond to ranking criteria. Applicants are responsible for the contents of their applications. All applicants applying for funding must have a Dunn and Bradstreet Universal Data Numbering System (DUNS) number. Applicants that do not already have a DUNS number may find instructions for obtaining one at the following website: <http://www.grants.gov/GetStarted>. A DUNS number may also be obtained by calling 1-866-705-5711.

Section V. Application Review Information

A. Evaluation Criteria

Each eligible proposal will be evaluated according to the criteria set forth below. Applicants should directly and explicitly address these criteria as part of their proposal submittal. Each proposal will be rated under a points system, with a total of 100 points possible.

Proposal Evaluation Criterion	Maximum Points per criterion
1. Extent to which the Proposed Project Focuses on Sustainable Agriculture and Uses Conservation Planning and a Whole Systems Approach - Proposals will be evaluated based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The description of the program's approach to methods for grower participation and adoption of sustainable pest management practices, along with applied research and extension program components, and; The extent that a "whole system" approach to pest management is encouraged, possibly including the development of an environmental certification program with a focus on specific reduced-risk pest management practices. 	15
2. Importance of Project in Relation to FQPA - Proposals will be evaluated based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent to which they address critical pest management issues either relative to the FQPA or emerging issues (ex: resistance management, more efficacious use of reduced-risk pesticides, cost-effective biological control) and are consistent with the goals of the SAI (See Section I for goals). The extent to which they focus on actual results, getting information and agricultural practices into the hands of growers who will actually use them to shift away from FQPA-targeted pesticides to more sustainable methods of pest management. 	10
3. Commodity and Region-wide Significance and Degree of Transferability to Other Areas - Proposals will be evaluated based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent they address agricultural commodity pest problems and 	10

discuss critical pest management issues (explaining the importance of the project and the commodity).	
<p>4. On-farm Demonstration with Active Roles for Multiple Grower Participation - Proposals will be evaluated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The extent of their partnerships and the participation of growers as part of the project activities. Cooperation with scientists, extension agents, pest control advisors, crop consultants other non-profit organizations, and other partners is encouraged. Letters of support from collaborators, indicating their contributions to the project, may be provided for this factor. 	10
<p>5. Clearly and Concise Measurable Objectives - Proposals will be evaluated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The clarity and ability to explain the project objectives and the degree to which the proposed project will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce or eliminate the use of highly toxic pesticides; and Increase farmers' adoption of reduced risk alternatives and/or sustainable integrated pest or crop management methods. Include a clear explanation of the methods (both quantitative and qualitative) that will be used to measure progress and impacts. Measures of success should be linked to reduction of pesticide use/risks, implementation of alternative agricultural practices, and/or similar impacts. 	10
<p>6. Environmental Results- Measurable or Quantifiable Outputs and Outcomes, Evaluation Plan-Projects will be evaluated on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likelihood of achieving predicted environmental results, the expected outcomes identified in Section I, project goals, and the production of on-the-ground quantifiable environmental change. In addition, they will be evaluated on their plan for tracking and measuring their progress towards achieving the expected outcomes and outputs identified in Section One of this announcement. These measures can be "direct" or "surrogate" measures. Direct measures identify actual environmental changes occurring with the adoption of reduced-risk pest management practices. In contrast, surrogate measures identify changes in strategies or behavior that should lead to environmental changes. Special consideration will be given to those partnering with agencies or organizations already monitoring environmental quality or applicator exposure in the project area. Clearly described project performance measures (<i>Note: if your project is selected for funding, measures included in your proposal may be subject to negotiation.</i>) Be sure to describe in detail your evaluation plan and the method(s) you will use to attain data to support the project performance measures indicated. (<i>For assistance in identifying appropriate project performance measures you are encouraged to choose from the measures listed in the Strategic Agriculture Initiative Toolbox located at http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/ (SAI Grant Applicants, Performance</i> 	10

<p><i>Measures</i>). If you choose to use unique performance measures, other than those listed in the Toolbox, they must be clearly described. If you cannot access the Toolbox, please contact Lora Lee Schroeder at (404) 562-9015 or Schroeder.lora@epa.gov.</p> <p>As referenced in Section IV, the proposal must also include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ number of acres likely to be impacted by the project; ○ current level of pest management and the level that is expected to be achieved at the end of the project based on the SAI Transition Index http://www.aftresearch.org/sai/ (SAI Grant Applicants); and c. percent of reduction or pound per acre reduction expected in the use of highly toxic active ingredients and/or pesticide products. 	
<p>7. Past Performance in Reporting Environmental Results – Proposals will be evaluated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and quality to which the applicant adequately documented and/or reported on its progress towards achieving expected results (e.g. outcomes and outputs) under EPA funded agency assistance agreements performed within the last three years, and if such progress was not being made whether the applicant adequately documented and/or reported why not. <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, EPA will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources, including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g. to verify and/or supplement the information supplied by the applicant). Applicants with no relevant or available past performance reporting history will receive a neutral score for this factor. The neutral score is 5.</p>	10
<p>8. Outreach/Use of Extension to Enhance the Likelihood of Grower Adoption – Proposals will be evaluated based on:</p> <p>The extent that there are clear plans for extension; outreach or communication that will likely lead to effective learning and adoption of new practices, and how the long term, sustainable adoption will be measured.</p>	10
<p>9. Programmatic Capability (Technical experience/qualification and experience of the applicant is demonstrated relative to the proposed project and involvement of key institutions and stakeholders) - EPA will also take into account such factors as the applicants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (i) past performance in successfully completing federally and/or non-federally funded projects similar in size, scope, and relevance to the proposed project, • (ii) past performance on reporting environmental outputs and outcomes, • (iii) history of meeting reporting requirements on prior or current assistance agreements with federal and/or non-federal organizations 	10

<p>and submitting acceptable final technical reports.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (iv) history of satisfactorily reporting on expected outputs/outcomes under prior/current assistance agreements, or satisfactorily explaining why they were not attained, • (v) organizational experience and plan for timely and successfully achieving the objectives of the project; and • (vi) staff expertise/qualifications, staff knowledge, and resources or the ability to obtain them, to successfully achieve the goals of the project. <p>Note: In evaluating applicants under this factor, the Agency will consider the information provided by the applicant and may also consider relevant information from other sources including agency files and prior/current grantors (e.g., to verify and-or supplement the information supplied by the applicant).</p> <p>In addition, applicants with no relevant or available past performance information or reporting history will receive a neutral score. The neutral score is 5.</p>	
<p>10. Project Leveraging (funding and partnerships) - Proposals will be evaluated based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How they will coordinate the use of EPA funding with other Federal and/or non Federal sources of funds to leverage additional resources to carry out the proposed project(s) and/or • EPA funding will compliment activities relevant to the proposed project(s) carried out by the applicant with other sources of funds or resources. Applicants may use their own funds or other resources for a voluntary match or cost share if the standards of 40CFR 30.23 or 40 CFR 31.24, as applicable, are met. Only eligible and allowable costs may be used for matches or cost shares. 	5

B. Review and Selection Process

There will be a three-tiered review process for proposals. The first tier will be a basic review of the proposals to assure they are eligible for funding consideration. The first tier will include a determination of whether the applicant has satisfied all the threshold criteria listed in Section III, Part C.

Those proposals that pass the first tier will undergo a second tier review. Each eligible proposal that meets the first tier review requirements will be reviewed by a panel consisting of EPA Region 4 staff and possibly some external partners. The second tier will involve the actual evaluation of the proposals against the criteria above. As a competitive financial assistance program, no proposal is guaranteed funding. Each proposal will be given a numerical score, with a total of 100 points possible.

The third tier review will involve a selection committee from the Region 4 staff making preliminary funding recommendations to the Region 4 Air, Pesticides and Toxics Management

Division Director. The review panel will rank the proposals based on their numerical scores and provide the rankings to the Selection Committee. The selection committee's recommendation will be forwarded to the Division Director for final funding decisions which will be based on the recommendation of the selection committee and consideration of programmatic priorities which are geographic and crop diversity

Section VI. Award Administration Information

A. Award Notices

Following the selection process, all applicants who submitted a proposal will be notified via e-mail regarding their application status. Letters will follow per the below schedule:

1. EPA anticipates notification to successful applicant(s) will be made via U.S. mail by December 7, 2006. This notification, which advises that the applicant's application package has been selected and is being recommended for award, is not an authorization to start the project. The award offer signed by the EPA Approving Official is the authorizing document and will be provided through postal mail. It can take 120 days or longer from the date an awardable application is received for the applicant to receive its award.

2. EPA anticipates notification to unsuccessful applicant(s) will be made via postal mail by December 14, 2006.

Note – USEPA reserves the right to negotiate appropriate changes in workplans after the selection and before the final award consistent with EPA's Competition Policy (EPA Order 5700.5A1, Section 11).

B. Administrative and National Policy Requirements

The award and administration of these grants will be governed by the Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements set forth at 40 CFR Part 30 or 31. In addition, the provision in 40 CFR Part 32 governing government-wide debarment and suspension, and the provisions in 40 CFR Part 34 regarding restrictions on lobbying applies.

Procurement Procedure: Once a proposal is selected, the recipient may be required to submit before award, in addition to a full application, a copy of its written procurement procedures developed in accordance with 40 CFR 30.40 – 30.48 or 40 CFR 31.36, as applicable, for review.

Allowable Costs: All costs incurred under this program must be allowable under the applicable OMB Cost Circulars. Copies of the circulars can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars>. In accordance with the EPA policy and the OMB circular, any recipient of funding must agree not to use assistance funds for fund-raising, or political activities such as lobbying members of Congress or lobbying for other federal grants, cooperative agreements, or contracts. EPA grant funds may only be used for the purposes set forth in the grant agreement, and must be consistent with the statutory authority for the award.

Grant funds may not be used for matching funds for other Federal grants, or intervention in Federal regulatory or adjudicatory proceedings. In addition, Federal funds may not be used to sue the Federal government or any other government entity.

Review of Non-Profits: Non-profit applicants that are recommended for funding under this announcement may be subject to pre-award administrative capability reviews consistent with Sections 8.b, 8.c, and 9.d of EPA Order 5700.8, ‘EPA Policy on Assessing Capabilities of Non-Profit Applicants for Managing Assistance Awards’ which can be found at http://www.epa.gov/ogd/grants/award/5700_8.pdf. Non-profit applicants that qualify for funding, depending on the size of the award, may be required to fill out and submit to the Grants Management Office the Administrative Capability Form, with supporting documents, contained in Appendix A of EPA Order 5700.8.

Quality Assurances: In accordance with 40 CFR 30.54 and 31.45, projects that include the generation or use of environmental data are required to submit a Quality Management Plan (QMP), and a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP). The QMP documents the organization quality system, identifies the environmental programs to which the quality system applies, and which is implemented following approval by the organization executive leadership. The QAPP includes efficacy and performance data, surveys and similar results. The QAPP is the document that provides comprehensive details about the quality assurance/quality control requirements and technical activities that must be implemented to ensure that project objectives are met. If selected for an award, Region 4 will provide examples of QAPPs and provide guidance in its development. In addition, to reduce paperwork, the QAPP may substitute for the “Methods and Materials” portion of the workplan. See <http://www.epa.gov/Quality/extramural.html> for further information about QMPs and QAPPs.

Conference/Workshops: If a conference or workshop is an element of the project, the applicant will be required to answer the following questions: Who is initiating the conference/workshop/meeting? How will it be advertised? Whose logo will be on the agenda and materials? What is the estimated percentage of participants expected to attend, i.e. federal, state, local or public? Will the grant recipient prepare the proceedings and disseminate the information back to the targeted community? Will program income be generated from this event?

Indirect Costs: If indirect costs are budgeted in the assistance application and the non-profit organization or educational institute does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it agrees to prepare and submit its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with the appropriate Federal cost principle, OMB Circular A-122, “Cost Principles for Non-Profit Organizations” or OMB Circular A-21, “Cost Principles for Educational Institutions” within ninety (90) from the effective date of the award for this assistance agreement.

If a local government does not have a previously established indirect cost rate, it will need to prepare its indirect cost rate proposal and/or cost allocation plan in accordance with OMB Circular A-87, “Cost Principles for State, Local, and Indian Tribal Governments.” The local government recipient whose cognizant federal agency has been designated by the Office of

Management and Budget (OMB) must develop and submit its indirect cost rate proposal for approval to its cognizant federal agency within six (6) months after the close of the governmental unit's fiscal year. If the cognizant federal agency has not been identified by the OMB, the local government recipient must still develop (and when required, submit) its proposal within that period.

Human Subjects: A grant recipient must agree to meet all EPA requirements for studies using human subjects prior to implementing any work with these subjects. These requirements are given in 40 C.F.R. 26, referred to as the "Common Rule." No work involving human subjects, including recruiting, may be initiated before the EPA has received a copy of the applicant's Institutional Review Board's (IRB) approval of the project and the EPA has also provided approval. Where human subjects are involved in the research, the recipient must provide evidence of subsequent IRB reviews, including amendments or minor changes of protocol, as part of the annual reports. Until further notice, EPA will not consider funding for research that involves intentional dosing human toxicity studies with pesticides.

C. Reporting Requirements

The selected grant recipients will be required to complete annual and final reports per the terms and conditions of the approval of the award. Final reports are due within 90 days of the completion of the project. The annual report must address the status of all of the objectives and activities in the proposal, environmental impacts measured or observed, and a statement of expenses. A template for the annual and final report will be provided to the grantees. Reports may be submitted either electronically or by hard paper copy.

D. Dispute Resolution Process

Grant competition-related disputes will be resolved in accordance with the dispute resolution procedures published in 70 FR (Federal Register) 3629, 3630 (January 26, 2005) which can be found at <http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/01jan20051800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2005/05-1271.htm>.

Section VII. Agency Contacts

If you have questions or need additional information regarding this Strategic Agricultural Initiative FQPA RFP, please contact:

Lora Lee Schroeder, EPA Region 4, Strategic Agricultural Initiative Coordinator,
telephone number: (404) 562-9015; e-mail: schroeder.lora@epa.gov

(AG-R4 Food Quality Protection Act RFP-06-RevJuly21)